

Many of the actions we take here in Washington have very direct ramifications on the Central Coast. I wanted to share just a couples of those issues that should be of great interest to our communities.

I've been working with the local veteran community, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to build a **joint outpatient clinic** for veterans and active and retired military members. In early December the House and Senate passed a package of bills that included funding for the VA; that bill also included official funding approval for construction of the new joint clinic. Once a few details on transfer of the land are ironed out, we can begin the process of building this new facility.

Another issue of interest to our veteran community is the **construction of a veterans' cemetery** at the former Fort Ord. I've sent out some communications already this year explaining that in order to expedite the opening of the cemetery, it's possible the cemetery may be limited to columbarium-only burials (vaults for ashes), without an in-ground burial option. I'm currently helping survey the local veterans on their feelings regarding this. I'm confident that we'll overcome the remaining obstacles and move forward on construction soon.

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